

As the co-chair of the Mainstream Tuesday Group, many in the press focus on Republican Moderates and their socially moderate views. We strongly believe in these issues but we are also fiscal conservatives. Over time, government spending cannot grow faster than our underlying economy that pays for public services. Last week, we debated the Deficit Reduction Act. Our Tuesday Group members made sure the bill dealt with the spending issue and not other unrelated concerns. That is why we successfully deleted proposals to open Alaska's National Wildlife Refuge to oil drilling. It was one of the Environmental Community's biggest victories of the year. In the end, the Deficit Reduction Act reformed many automatic federal spending programs that were growing at twice the rate of the underlying economy. Given the promises we made under Social Security and Medicare, we must review other federal spending commitments to ensure we care for America's seniors. Last week, we voted to reform these other federal programs so that we will continue to afford to fulfill the promises we made under Social Security and Medicare.